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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/568,249      | 08/03/2006  | Gunter Leopold       | FISCP0102US         | 9694             |

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| EXAMINER |
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MERLINO, ALYSON MARIE

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

3676

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE  | DELIVERY MODE |
|--|------------|---------------|
| 3 MONTHS                               | 03/09/2007 | PAPER         |

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/568,249

Applicant(s)

LEOPOLD, GUNTER

Examiner

Alyson M. Merlino

Art Unit

3676

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 February 2006 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 14 February 2006.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because they fail to show how restoring rib 24 rides over the second restoring device 14 in order to maintain the mass 11 in the position shown in Figure 2, especially, a figure showing the receptacle in the open position detailing the position of the safety locking mechanism with respect to the housing, as described in the specification. Any structural detail that is essential for a proper understanding of the disclosed invention should be shown in the drawing. MPEP § 608.02(d). Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Specification***

2. The specification is objected to because it fails to recite cross-references to related applications, specifically, applicant claims priority within the Declaration to German Application 103 40 673.5 with a date of 04/09/2003, but does not recite this proclamation in the specification.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. **Claims 1-5 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, within the preamble of claim 1, it is stated that the safety locking mechanism is for a receptacle in a vehicle. This is a statement of intended use, therefore, if applicant wants to refer to the receptacle within the body of claim 1 and the dependent claims, then the receptacle must be positively claimed within the claim; i.e. a safety locking mechanism in combination with a receptacle in a vehicle. For examination purposes, the safety locking mechanism will be considered in combination with the receptacle.

5. **Claim 5 is rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Applicant claims second restoring device, however, the mechanical relationship

Art Unit: 3676

between the second restoring device 14 and the restoring rib 24 is unclear in the specification. Specifically, it is unclear how the second restoring device 14 will maintain the mass 11 in channel 20 as the restoring rib 24 moves over the second restoring device. Until further clarification from applicant, the claim will be broadly interpreted.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. **Claims 1-3 and 5 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukumoto (US-5052728).

8. **In regards to claim 1**, Fukumoto discloses a safety locking mechanism (Figure 5) having a mass 12 movably guided by guide means 11, 21 from a basic position (Figure 9) into a deflected position (Figure 8). Fukumoto further discloses that the mass holds the receptacle closed when in the deflected position (Figure 8). Fukumoto also discloses that the safety locking mechanism has a device 20 with hold the mass in the basic position when no acceleration or deceleration acts in the deflection direction on the mass. The safety locking mechanism also includes an engaging device 23, which holds the mass in the deflected position (Figure 8), and a restoring device 24 effective by applying an overpressure to the receptacle, which directs the mass into the basic position (Col. 6, lines 51-68 and Col. 7, lines 1-12).

Art Unit: 3676

9. **In regards to claims 2 and 3**, Fukumoto discloses a damping element 30, 31, 32 that acts against the application of an overpressure to the receptacle (Col. 7, lines 33-43).
10. **In regards to claim 5**, Fukumoto discloses a second restoring device 9.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

11. **Claim 4 would be allowable** if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The claim contains allowable subject matter not fairly disclosed by the prior art pertaining to the mass being deflectable in two opposing directions, with the mass being held in deflected position by the engaging device, and the ability of the mass to hold the receptacle closed in each deflected position.

***Conclusion***

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Asano (US-5386636) discloses a safety locking device of similar function to that of the claimed device.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alyson M. Merlino whose telephone number is (571) 272-2219. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 7:30 - 5:00.

Art Unit: 3676

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Glessner can be reached on (571) 272-6843. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

AM AM  
March 1, 2007

  
Suzanne Dino Barrett  
Primary Examiner